

DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE
Security Committee

SECOM-D-646

24 September 1979

MEMORANDUM FOR: SECOM Members

FROM: Robert W. Gambino
Chairman

SUBJECT: Proposed Top Secret Classification Criteria
for National Foreign Intelligence

REFERENCE: Executive Secretary, SECOM, Memorandum
SECOM-D-547 dated 12 June 1979, Subject:
Proposed Single Agency Guide for Classifi-
cation of Top Secret National Foreign
Intelligence

1. Referenced memorandum forwarded proposed Top Secret criteria that had been developed for CIA use, and requested SECOM members to coordinate those criteria within their departments and agencies with a view towards later formal consideration. The earlier criteria have been revised as a result of internal CIA coordination, and are now unclassified.

2. A copy of the current, proposed CIA Top Secret classification criteria is attached. I ask that you review it for suitability (with necessary editorial changes to make it of Community applicability) as a DCI policy statement to be issued after appropriate NFIB coordination. Such a policy statement would be supportive of the President's charge to the DCI in Executive Order 12036 (section 1-601(h)) to "conduct a program to protect against overclassification of foreign intelligence information."

3. I request your comments on this matter by not later than 15 October 1979. If we have not heard from you by then, your concurrence will be assumed. Please address comments to the Executive Secretary.

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[Redacted Signature]

Robert W. Gambino

Attachment

DRAFT

Criteria for TOP SECRET Classification

I. DEFINITION

Executive Order 12065 uses the following definition to justify TOP SECRET classification:

"TOP SECRET" shall be applied only to information the unauthorized disclosure of which reasonably could be expected to cause exceptionally grave damage to the national security.

In compliance with the injunction to use the least restrictive designations possible, TOP SECRET classification within CIA will be carefully restricted to the subject areas listed below.

a. MILITARY AFFAIRS

(1) Information revealing details of United States national defense plans, weapons systems, and military command, control and communications systems, or operations, which are themselves classified TOP SECRET.

(2) Information regarding the imminence of armed hostilities against the United States and related contingency plans or counteractions.

b. FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS

(1) Information provided the United States by any element of a foreign government or international organization of governments which has been classified TOP SECRET or its equivalent by such a government or organization.

(2) Information about joint activities with foreign governments which are mutually agreed to be classified TOP SECRET.

c. INTELLIGENCE

(1) Information revealing cryptographic data, or United States possession thereof, which if compromised could deny the United States information critical to national security.

(2) Information about major United States technical collection systems which would:

- (a) -- provide knowledge of their vulnerability to counteraction.
- (b) -- provide knowledge about that specific technology of a system which is unique to the United States.
- (c) -- reveal the capabilities of a collection program providing significant intelligence data which could not be attributed to other sources.
- (d) -- reveal data about newly developing systems to provide unique collection capabilities.

(3) Information in Agency reports, analyses, or formally coordinated National Intelligence Estimates or assessments, which contains:

- (a) -- data about sensitive aspects of intelligence sources and methods as specified in (1) and (2) above.
- (b) -- comprehensive appraisals of the capabilities, intentions and activities of foreign military forces

representing a potential strategic threat to the United States and its allies.

(c) -- data about foreign nuclear programs which if compromised could deny the United States information critical to national security or disclose sensitive aspects of intelligence sources and methods as specified in (1) and (2) above.

(4) Information revealing:

(a) -- a complete or substantially complete listing of the names and official titles of CIA employees.

(b) -- the complete or substantially complete CIA organizational structure, and the numbers, responsibilities, and locations of components and installations.

(c) -- the full range of CIA operational activities.

(d) -- CIA annual reports, budgets, and statements of financial condition.

d. FOREIGN RELATIONS AND ACTIVITIES

(1) Information revealing the nature of sensitive national defense or foreign policy documents, or contingency and planning papers, which are themselves classified TOP SECRET.

(2) Information about covert United States foreign intelligence activities or collection programs which, if compromised, could lead directly to grave disruptions of diplomatic relations or to the loss of life of United States personnel.

(3) Information revealing policy initiatives which could involve the commitment of United States military forces.

e. NUCLEAR MATERIALS AND FACILITIES

(1) Information about United States programs for safeguarding nuclear materials or facilities which are classified TOP SECRET.

f. COMMUNICATIONS AND EMANATIONS SECURITY

(1) Operational cryptographic data or material whereby communications circuits used for the transmission of TOP SECRET information are or may be secured.

(2) Information relating to the vulnerabilities of cryptographic equipment.

(3) Information relating to certain emanations or emissions vulnerabilities of cryptographic and information processing equipment, and associated technical countermeasures.


DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE
Security Committee

SECOM-D-547

12 JUN 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR: Members, DCI Security Committee

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FROM:


Executive Secretary

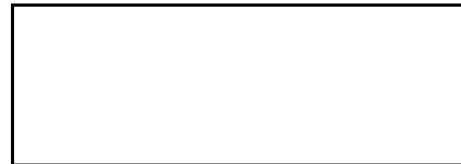
SUBJECT: Proposed Single Agency Guide
for Classification of TOP SECRET
National Foreign Intelligence

1. It has been recommended that the DCI Security Committee review the attached proposed criteria as a possible uniform Intelligence Community guide for TOP SECRET Classification of National Foreign Intelligence.

2. Members are requested to coordinate within their respective Departments and Agencies only as they deem appropriate to obtain a sense of the position their agency may take should the attached be formally proposed.

3. Please be prepared to discuss this issue at the July meeting.

Attachment



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Separated From Attachment

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Approved For Release 2002/05/07 : CIA-RDP85-00821R000100030025-6

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29 May 1979

MEMORANDUM FOR: Mr. Robert W. Gambino
Director of Security

STATINTL FROM :
Special Assistant to the DCI

SUBJECT : Security Task Force Recommendation 13--Revisited

1. During our earlier deliberations, it was agreed that the Ad Hoc Task Force's proposed implementation of Recommendation 13 be coordinated within the Agency with a view to its adoption as the single Agency guide for TOP SECRET classification. (U)

2. This coordination has now been completed and the amended statement is attached herewith. I believe my panel has responded adequately to the changes requested by Agency components, with one exception. This exception was a request from the Office of Security that safe or lock combinations be classified TOP SECRET. My panel was hard put to buy this recommendation. We fail to see how it meets the test of "exceptionally grave damage." We also noted the requester's comments that although these combinations would be classified TOP SECRET, they would not be placed under the formal system for TOP SECRET control. Finally, we noted that the annual summer exercise of changing lock and safe combinations is done by summer employees who hold only SECRET level clearances. (U)

3. I recommend that the Agency go ahead and issue these criteria without waiting for all of the other Security Task Force recommendations regarding information handling to be staffed out. I also recommend that the criteria be forwarded to the DCI Security Committee to staff their review and acceptance as a uniform Intelligence Community guide for TOP SECRET classification. (U)



Attachment

Criteria for TOP SECRET Classification

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In compliance with the injunction to use the least restrictive designations possible, TOP SECRET classification within CIA will be carefully restricted to the subject areas listed below.

a. MILITARY AFFAIRS

(1) Information whose compromise would reveal the details of US national defense plans, weapons systems, and military command, control and communications systems, or operations, which are themselves classified TOP SECRET.

(2) Information regarding the imminence of armed hostilities against the US and related US contingency plans or counteractions.

b. FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS

(1) Information provided the US by any element of a foreign government or international organization which has been classified TOP SECRET or its equivalent by the foreign government.

(2) Information about joint intelligence activities with foreign governments which are mutually agreed to be classified TOP SECRET.

c. INTELLIGENCE

(1) Information revealing that the US has cipher or code keying materials or other cryptographic information which, if compromised, could deny the US information critical to its national security.

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(2) Information about major US technical collection systems which would:

(a)--provide knowledge of their vulnerability to counteraction.

(b)--provide knowledge about that specific technology of a system which is unique to the US.

(c)--reveal the capabilities of a collection program which provides significant intelligence data which could not be attributed to other sources.

(d)--reveal data about newly developing systems which will provide unique collection capabilities.

(3) CIA reporting and analyses, or formally coordinated National Intelligence Estimates or assessments which provide information about:

(a)--the sensitive aspects of intelligence sources and methods specified in (1) and (2) above.

(b)--comprehensive assessments of the capabilities, intentions and activities of foreign military forces representing a potential strategic threat to the US and its allies.

(4) Documents providing comprehensive data which would reveal:

(a)--a complete or substantially complete listing of the names and official titles of CIA employees.

(b)--the complete or substantially complete CIA organizational structure, and the numbers, responsibilities, and locations of components and installations.

(c)--the full range of CIA operational activities.

(d)--CIA annual reports, budgets, and statements of financial condition.

d. FOREIGN RELATIONS AND ACTIVITIES

(1) Information whose compromise would reveal the nature of sensitive national defense or foreign policy documents or contingency and planning papers which are themselves classified TOP SECRET.

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(2) Information about covert US foreign intelligence activities or collection programs which, if compromised, could lead to grave disruptions of diplomatic relations or the direct loss of life of US personnel.

(3) Policy initiatives which could involve the commitment of US military forces.

e. NUCLEAR MATERIALS AND FACILITIES

(1) Information about US programs for safeguarding nuclear materials or facilities which are classified TOP SECRET and information on foreign nuclear programs which, if compromised, would identify our most sensitive intelligence sources and methods, as specified in Section III.

f. COMMUNICATIONS AND EMANATIONS SECURITY

(1) Operational cryptographic keying material used to secure communications circuits used for the transmission of TOP SECRET information.

(2) Information relating to the vulnerabilities of cryptographic equipment.

(3) Information relating to certain emanations or emissions vulnerabilities of cryptographic and information processing equipment and associated technical countermeasures.

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